



**CUYAHOGA COUNTY**  
Natural Resources Assistance Council

# Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program

District One Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC)  
Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Applicant Manual

## ABOUT THE APPLICATION MANUAL

The information in this document relates directly to the District One NRAC Project Evaluation Methodology. The NRAC evaluation process utilizes the evaluation criteria outlined in ORC Section 164.24. The NRAC assigns points and weight factors to each of the evaluation criteria to determine which projects should be recommended for Clean Ohio Conservation funding.

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM .....	2
CUYAHOGA COUNTY GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES .....	2
DISTRICT ONE NATURAL RESOURCES ASSISTANCE COUNCIL .....	3
NATURAL RESOURCES ASSISTANCE COUNCIL .....	4
FISCAL YEAR 2024 GUIDELINES.....	6
APPLICATION DUE DATE .....	6
APPLICATION MATERIALS .....	6
FISCAL YEAR 2024 SCHEDULE .....	7
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS .....	8
PROJECT TYPES.....	8
OPEN SPACE .....	8
RIPARIAN CORRIDORS .....	9
FUNDING.....	10
PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS.....	11
FISCAL YEAR (FY) APPLICATION SUPPLEMENT INSTRUCTIONS.....	13
APPLICANT INFORMATION .....	13
SECTION ONE - PROJECT EMPHASIS .....	13
SECTION TWO - PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....	13
SECTION THREE - COUNTY PRINCIPLES .....	15
SECTION FOUR - PROJECT BENEFITS .....	15
SECTION FIVE – COMMUNITY IMPACT.....	16
SECTION SIX - OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS .....	21
EVALUATION POINTS.....	25

## CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program provides funds to preserve open spaces, sensitive ecological areas, and stream corridors. The Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) is responsible for administering the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program through 19 Natural Resource Assistance Councils.

The District One Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC) is responsible for administering the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program in Cuyahoga County and is responsible for:

1. Promoting the development and improvement of Cuyahoga County's open space and the protection and enhancement of riparian corridors and watersheds.
2. Evaluating and selecting applications from local jurisdictions within Cuyahoga County for financial assistance from the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program.

## CUYAHOGA COUNTY GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

The District One NRAC considers the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program a unique opportunity for advancing environmental conservation and improving the quality of life in Cuyahoga County. The five principles listed below reflect the essential needs of Cuyahoga County. Successful applicants should ensure that their project(s) accomplishes these essential elements:

1. **Preserve** natural areas or open space.
2. **Restore** landscapes that have been degraded or destroyed.
3. **Enhance** the quality of natural areas or open space to promote passive recreation and educational opportunities.
4. **Link** natural areas to each other or to county cultural and civic heritage areas.
5. **Allow** public access to and within natural areas and/or county cultural and civic heritage areas.

Cuyahoga is the largest and most urbanized of Ohio's eighty-eight counties – approximately ninety percent (90%) of its land is developed, and only ten percent (10%) of this land is considered designated open space. These open spaces are fragmented and offer limited public access. Some are degraded and destroyed by pollution and mismanagement; others remain abandoned by outmigration and/or poor planning.

Open space is an important and vital part of daily life in urban areas – it can improve the social health of our communities, the environmental quality of our ecosystems, and the economic viability of our region. Protecting and restoring natural systems—their biodiversity, habitats, and aesthetics - will result in a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable Cuyahoga County.

It is the NRAC's intent to ensure that the open space and riparian corridor projects that are selected for funding are visible, accessible, and instructional to the public.

## **DISTRICT ONE NATURAL RESOURCES ASSISTANCE COUNCIL**

The District One Public Works Integrating Committee (DOPWIC), as directed in the Ohio Revised Code Section 164.21, appoints the members of the Cuyahoga County Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC). The NRAC consists of eleven (11) members, with one (1) member being from the appointing integrating committee (DOPWIC) and one (1) member from the Soil and Water Conservation District located in Cuyahoga County.

The other nine (9) members are appointed from categories of organizations, units of government or agencies as prescribed in ORC 164.21(A)(1). There must be at least one representative from each group:

Group 1: County, municipal corporation, township, conservancy district, regional or joint district or unit of government, or regional or joint political subdivision located in the geographical jurisdiction of the DOPWIC.

Group 2: Conservation or environmental advocacy organization, an organization with a primary interest in watershed protection and restoration, the department of natural resources, the environmental protection agency, or the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Group 3: A city park system or metropolitan park system or a board of park commissioners located within the geographical jurisdiction of the appointing integrating committee, a statewide parks and recreation organization, or the U.S. National Park Service.

Group 4: A statewide organization representing agriculture, an organization representing forestry interests, the department of agriculture, or the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Group 5: An organization representing business, local realtors, or a planning agency, including a port authority, located within the geographical jurisdiction of the appointing integrating committee.

## NATURAL RESOURCES ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

### **Ms. Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells**

Chief Executive Officer  
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District  
3900 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44115  
Phone: 216.881.6600  
Email: [dreyfuss-wellsk@neorsd.org](mailto:dreyfuss-wellsk@neorsd.org)

### **Ms. Valerie Katz, Secretary**

Deputy Director of Sustainability, Cuyahoga County  
2079 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 8-300  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
Phone: 216.443.3785  
Email: [vkatz@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:vkatz@cuyahogacounty.us)

### **Ms. Claire Kilbane**

Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District  
860 Brick Mill Run  
Westlake, OH 44145  
Phone: 216.509.3965  
Email: [cmkilbane@gmail.com](mailto:cmkilbane@gmail.com)

### **Honorable Paul Koomar, Vice-Chair**

Mayor, City of Bay Village  
350 Dover Center Road  
Bay Village, Ohio 44140  
Phone: 440.899.3415  
Email: [pkoomar@cityofbayvillage.com](mailto:pkoomar@cityofbayvillage.com)

### **Honorable Michael Procuk**

Mayor, Village of Brooklyn Heights  
345 Tuxedo Avenue  
Brooklyn Heights, OH 44131  
Phone: 216.749.4300  
Email: [mprocuk@brooklynhts.org](mailto:mprocuk@brooklynhts.org)

### **Ms. Kimberly Rassi**

Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau  
371 Park Drive  
Brooklyn Heights, OH 44131  
Phone: 216.276.9405  
Email: [vintagealpacas@aol.com](mailto:vintagealpacas@aol.com)

### **Group 2 (Environmental) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2021 – October 14, 2024

### **Group 1 (Government) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
September 27, 2022 – October 14, 2023

### **Soil & Water Conservation Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2021 – October 14, 2024

### **DOPWIC Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2021 – October 14, 2024

### **Group 1 (Government) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2020 – October 14, 2023

### **Group 4 (Agricultural) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2020 – October 14, 2023

**Mr. Jay Rauschenbach, AICP**

Parks & Recreation Planning Manager  
City of Cleveland, Mayor's Office of Capital Projects  
601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 8  
Cleveland, OH 44114  
Phone: 216.664. 6012  
Email: [jrauschenbach@clevelandohio.gov](mailto:jrauschenbach@clevelandohio.gov)

**Mr. Joseph Roszak, Chair**

Chief Operating Officer  
Cleveland Metroparks  
4101 Fulton Parkway  
Cleveland, OH 44144  
Phone: 216.635.3200  
Email: [jvr@clevelandmetroparks.com](mailto:jvr@clevelandmetroparks.com)

**Dr. Rebecca Swab, PhD**

Director of Conservation & Community Forestry  
Holden Forests and Gardens  
9550 Sperry Rd  
Kirtland, OH 44094  
Phone: 440.602. 8014  
Email: [rswab@holdenarb.org](mailto:rswab@holdenarb.org)

**Ms. Linda Sternheimer**

Director, Urban Planning and Engagement  
Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority  
1100 West 9th Street - Suite 300  
Cleveland, OH 44113  
Phone: 216.377.1348  
Email: [Linda.Sternheimer@portofcleveland.com](mailto:Linda.Sternheimer@portofcleveland.com)

**Mr. Sean Terry**

Associate Vice President, Ohio State Director  
Trust for Public Land  
1250 Old River Rd., Suite 202  
Cleveland, OH 44113  
Phone: 216.928.7518 x110  
Email: [sean.terry@tpl.org](mailto:sean.terry@tpl.org)

**Group 3 (Park) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2022 – October 14, 2025

**Group 3 (Park) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
December 3, 2019 - October 14, 2022

**Group 2 (Environmental) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
September 27, 2022 – October 14, 2024

**Group 5 (Business/Planning) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
January 24, 2023 – October 14, 2024

**Group 2 (Environmental) Representative**

Term of Appointment:  
October 15, 2022 – October 14, 2025

# FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2024 GUIDELINES

## APPLICATION DUE DATE

To be considered for financial assistance, applications must be submitted by:

**4:30 p.m. Friday, July 14, 2023, to**  
the **Ohio Public Works Commission** and  
**Cuyahoga County Planning Commission**

## APPLICATION MATERIALS

The Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Program evaluation process utilizes the OPWC WorksWise Application in conjunction with the NRAC Application Supplement and supporting documentation. Please provide supporting documentation in the appropriate attachments separated by a cover page. The required application materials must be submitted into OPWC WorksWise. All WorksWise training materials can be found at <https://www.pwc.ohio.gov/WorksWise-Training>. A PDF of the completed Application materials must be sent electronically to the District One Liaison, Alison Ball, at [aball@cuyahogacounty.us](mailto:aball@cuyahogacounty.us), utilizing the following District One NRAC Standard application format and naming convention:

- 1. OPWC Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation WorksWise Application**  
[Project name] \_Application.pdf
- 2. District One NRAC Application Supplement,**  
[Project name] \_Supplement.pdf
- 3. Authorizations and Resolutions of Support**  
[Project name] \_Attachment\_Authorizations.pdf,
  - Certification of Match
  - Award Letters
- 4. Agreements and Letters of Support**  
[Project name] \_Attachment\_AgreementsLOS.pdf
- 5. Maps and Photos**  
[Project name] \_Attachment\_MapsPhotos.pdf
- 6. Natural Resource Information**  
[Project name] \_Attachment\_NaturalResources.pdf
- 7. Property Information (Parcel #)**  
[Project name] \_Attachment [Parcel #] \_PropertyInfo.pdf, to include:
  - Appraisals and Documentation that the Appraiser read [OPWC's Standards and Procedures](#)
  - Conservation Easements
  - Letters of Intent/Memorandum of Understanding
  - Purchase Agreements

- Deeds and Proposed Deed Restrictions
- Property Value - Appraisals and County Fiscal Office.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all the documents are accurate, complete and in accordance with the requirements, terms, and conditions set down by the OPWC and the NRAC. Failure to meet these conditions will result in the disqualification of a project. Resolutions of Support, if required, Letters of Support and all required documentation are due with the application materials.

**INCOMPLETE OR LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE EVALUATED BY THE NRAC.**

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 SCHEDULE

The NRAC has established the following schedule for evaluating and selecting projects for FY 2024:

DATE*	ACTIVITY
Monday, April 3, 2023	Fiscal Year 2024 Applications Materials made available
Thursday, April 13, 2023	Applicant Workshop
Friday, July 14, 2023	Clean Ohio Applications <b>Due by 4:30PM</b>
July 16 – July 21, 2023	Preliminary screening of submitted applications
Friday, July 28, 2023	Site Visits
July 21 – August 31, 2023	NRAC Evaluation and Preliminary Scoring
<b>Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 9 am</b>	<b>NRAC Meeting – Applicant Interviews</b>
Thursday, August 31, 2023	NRAC Scores Submitted
<b>Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 1 pm</b>	<b>NRAC Meeting - Review Scores**</b>
<b>Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 9 am</b>	<b>NRAC Meeting - Vote on Final Project Ranking**</b>
November 30, 2023	Deadline to Submit Recommendations to OPWC

\*All Dates subject to change.

\*\* Vote on Final Project Ranking may occur on September 12<sup>th</sup> Score Review Meeting



## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are limited to local political subdivisions and nonprofit organizations (501(c)(3), that have a subdivision code as described in the Clean Ohio Advisory, at <https://pwc.ohio.gov/Advisories/Clean-Ohio#63958-subdivision-applicant-codes>

### Local Political Subdivisions

- Counties
- Municipalities
- Townships
- Conservancy Districts
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Joint Recreation Districts
- Park District/Authority
- Lake Facilities Authority

**Non-Profit Corporations** – A non-profit corporation is eligible to apply if it is exempt from Federal income taxation pursuant to 26 U.S.C 501 (a) and one of its designated activities is directly related to the purposes for which Clean Ohio Conservation grants are issued.

## PROJECT TYPES

### OPEN SPACE

Open Space projects should promote the following:

- Comprehensive open space planning
- Aesthetically pleasing and ecologically informed design
- Economic development that promotes local economic development and/or community development initiatives in high unemployment and/or low-income areas
- Protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species habitats
- Protection of high quality, viable habitats for plant and animal species
- Preservation of wetlands or other scarce natural resources
- Pedestrian or bicycle linkages
- Educational opportunities
- Quality of life and the natural heritage of the state
- Reduction or elimination of nonnative, invasive species of plants or animals
- Balancing the natural ecosystem.

Eligible Open Space projects include:

- Acquisition of open space
- Acquisition of easements
- Acquisition of land or rights in land for parks, forests, wetlands, or natural areas that protect an endangered plant or animal population
- Connecting corridors for natural areas
- Construction or enhancement of facilities, on properties purchased with Clean Ohio funds, to make open space accessible and usable by members of the public.

**Not Eligible** – Acquisition of open space for “active recreation” like baseball diamonds, tennis courts, or other similar facilities

## **RIPARIAN CORRIDORS**

Riparian Corridor projects should promote:

- Habitat protection
- Stream corridor-wide or watershed planning
- Recreational, economic, and aesthetic preservation benefits
- Floodplain and streamside forest functions
- Headwater stream preservation
- Restoration and preservation of aquatic biological communities.

Eligible Riparian Corridor projects include:

- Reforestation of land or the planting of vegetation for filtration purposes
- Fee simple acquisition of lands to provide access to riparian corridors or watersheds
- Acquisition of easements for the purpose of protecting and enhancing riparian corridors or watersheds.

**Not Eligible** -Riparian corridor projects that initiate or perpetuate hydromodification such as dams, ditch development or channelization.

The following activities are eligible for both Open Space and Riparian Corridor projects:

## **ACQUISITION**

- Fee Simple
- Easement
- Donations or Donated Land and Easements

## PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Certified Appraisal – which must be *performed by an ODOT Prequalified Appraiser who is credentialed in appraisals*
- Appraisal Review
- Closing Costs
- Title Search
- Environmental Assessments
- Design

## CONSTRUCTION OR ENHANCEMENT OF FACILITIES

- Improvements to make open space accessible and useable by the public that promote passive recreation and educational opportunities.
- See the OPWC website for eligible access improvement cost scenarios at <https://www.pwc.ohio.gov/Programs/Clean-Ohio-Application#591122-eligible-costs>.

## FUNDING

The funding available for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024:

FY 2024 Allocation	\$3,214,479
FY 2023 Carry Over Balance	\$133,733
<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$3,348,212</b>

**GRANTS:** A maximum 75% of the estimated total project cost. A minimum 25% local match is required.

### ELIGIBLE LOCAL MATCH SOURCES:

- Contributions of money by any person, local political subdivision, state, or the federal government.
- Contributions in-kind through the purchase or donation of equipment, land, easements, interest in land, labor, and materials necessary to complete the project.
- All local match amounts must be certified per Section 1.3 on page 5 of the Instructions for Financial Assistance of the OPWC Clean Ohio Fund Greenspace Conservation Program application.

# PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The NRAC has established a three-phase process to select the projects that will be recommended to the OPWC for final evaluation and approval.

## PHASE 1: ELIGIBILITY

**1.1** Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and initial site visits will be scheduled. **Applications deemed ineligible will not be evaluated by the NRAC** (see the NRAC Policy Manual). Point values will be assigned by NRAC staff for the following categories:

- Community Impact (Section 5)
- Local Match (Section 6.1 of scoring)
- Readiness to Proceed based on documentation for land acquisition projects only (Section 6.3A of scoring).

## PHASE 2: PRELIMINARY PROJECT EVALUATION

**2.1** Applications will be reviewed by the NRAC members for compliance with OPWC and NRAC policies and procedures.

**2.2** Using the Evaluation Criteria, the NRAC members evaluate each application and assign an initial score in each of the evaluation categories. Documents used by the NRAC for project scores are the OPWC Application, the NRAC Application Supplement and any other documentation supplied by the Applicant.

**2.3** Applicant interviews are an important component of project scores. They give the NRAC and the applicant an opportunity to clarify issues and highlight aspects of the project that could not be conveyed through the application.

After the Applicant Interviews, each applicant will be given five (5) business days to respond to any NRAC requests for additional information regarding the submitted items. If the Applicant does not respond, the project will be scored using the original information.

**2.4** After evaluation of all submitted project materials and following the Applicant interviews, each NRAC member submits a preliminary score for each project. The individual project criteria are weighted as high, medium, and low. Criteria that are of high interest will have a weight of 3; medium interest a weight of 2; and low interest a weight of 1 (see the Evaluation Points on page 25). Weight factors will be applied, and preliminary project rankings will be determined.

### **PHASE 3: PROJECT SCORING AND SELECTION**

- 3.1** NRAC members will meet to review and discuss the project rankings and to allow any interested applicants the opportunity to raise questions. The NRAC can choose to adopt the project rankings as final and close all discussion of PY 2021 projects at this first review meeting.
- 3.2** If NRAC members need to reconsider or refine their scores and submit new scores, the NRAC will reconvene for a second time to review and discuss the revised Project Rankings and adopt the PY 2021 Final Project Ranking that will subsequently be sent to the OPWC as projects recommended for funding.
- 3.3** To be considered for recommendation to OPWC, a project must receive a minimum evaluation score of 156 points, or sixty percent (60%) of the total points available.
- 3.4** In the case of a tie between two or more projects, the tie will be broken based on the highest scores received by the projects in the following categories, listed in priority order:
  - 1.** Local Match
  - 2.** Community Impact
  - 3.** The amount of funds requested from low to high.
- 3.5** If the last qualified project on the funding list cannot receive its full funding request, the NRAC will consider a request from the Applicant for partial funding of the project. With that request, the Applicant will need to provide the NRAC with a revised budget and project scope.
- 3.6** All final NRAC scores will be posted online on the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission website and the OPWC website and the FISCAL YEAR 2024 results will be submitted to the OPWC for final project review and funding determination.

# FISCAL YEAR (FY) APPLICATION SUPPLEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

**Project Name:**

Name of the project. Please use the same name stated on the OPWC application.

**Sponsoring Organization:**

Indicate the name of the Applicant. Projects involving multiple applicants must designate a lead agency.

**Other Sponsoring Organization:**

Indicate the name(s) of any other organizations that are participating in the project.

**Contact Person:**

Provide the name of the individual who can best answer or coordinate the response to questions about the project.

**Phone and Email Address:**

Enter the daytime telephone number and the email address of the contact person.

## SECTION ONE - PROJECT EMPHASIS

ORC 164.24 (1) and ORC 164.24 (7)

Depending upon the type of project submitted, open space or riparian corridor, check each factor that will be achieved by the project.

For example: If an open space project will ***incorporate an aesthetically-pleasing and ecologically-informed design; protect high-quality, viable habitats for plant and animal species; and provide educational opportunities;*** then all four factors should be checked.

## SECTION TWO - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Project Name:** Enter the project name as listed in Applicant Information (see above).

**Type of Project for which funds are being requested:** Check the type of project:

1. Acquisition of land and facilities enhancement

2. Open Space Improvement or Enhancement of Clean Ohio Properties
3. Riparian corridor project.

### **Appraisal or Conservation Value and Property Information For Acquisition Projects:**

Indicate the value of the land by providing the following documentation:

1. A Summary of the Appraisal Report included in the Application Supplement
2. A certified Appraisal Report performed by an ODOT Prequalified Appraiser, who is credentialed in appraisals. The list of approved ODOT appraisers can be found at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Engineering/Consultant/Consultant/prequal-row.pdf>
3. Documentation from the appraiser that he/she has received and read OPWC's Standards and Procedures document. See <https://www.pwc.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Documents/Appraisal%20Standards%200120.pdf?ver=2020-01-27-090500-190>
4. Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer's property valuation for the project site.

**For Open Space Development Projects:** Provide the required documentation: the executed settlement statement, the recorded deed and proposed deed restrictions, including specific Use and Development Restrictions, any conservation easement.

**For Riparian Corridor Projects:** Provide the conservation agreement, or the recorded deed with any proposed deed restrictions.

**Project Description:** Provide a project description and attach a map(s) showing the project location(s) and the local context in the Maps and Photos Attachment. Explain the following:

1. The project location: include a link to the project location by utilizing the Cuyahoga County Greenprint, which is available at <http://www.countyplanning.us/projects/cuyahoga-county-greenprint/>.
2. The current conditions and any site improvements that will be made as part of the project. Include the proposed Deed Restrictions that identifies the Use and Development Restrictions in the Property Information attachment. Also include an itemized estimate of probable costs for all improvements utilizing Clean Ohio funds. This estimate must be provided by an architect, landscape architect, or other qualified professional and must be included in the Natural Resource Information Attachment.

3. Indicate if there are existing structures on the property. If applicable, provide the appraised value of the structure, the proportion of structure value to overall value, and any intended actions for the structure (e.g., demolition, re-use, rehabilitation or other).

## SECTION THREE - COUNTY PRINCIPLES

ORC 164.24 (8)

**Scoring: Up to 10 points per principle - maximum of 50 points.**

These five (5) principles are the foundation upon which the evaluation methodology was developed. The NRAC's intent is to recommend projects that will advance these principles. Each NRAC member will assess to what degree a principle is met.

**Principle 1:** Preserve natural areas or open space.

**Principle 2:** Enhance the quality of natural areas or open space to promote passive recreation and educational opportunities.

**Principle 3:** Restore landscapes that have been degraded or destroyed. \*

**Principle 4:** Link natural areas to each other or to cultural and civic heritage areas within the county.

**Principle 5:** Allow public access to and within natural areas and/or cultural and civic heritage areas of regional significance within the county.

**\* To be eligible for restoration points, the project must include restoration as a portion of the project scope, budget, or local match. Provide supporting documentation.**

Applicants should identify the principle(s) that will be advanced by their project and provide a description in the appropriate section.

## SECTION FOUR - PROJECT BENEFITS

ORC 164.24 (6)

**Scoring: Up to 10 points per benefit**

Studies have shown that conservation projects can provide value beyond those associated with environmental benefits. Indeed, the existence of open space and watershed projects can provide economic and social benefits to all members of society. Briefly explain the applicable benefits that are anticipated as a result of this project.

### ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Supports a priority local economic and/or community development initiative.
- Catalyzes other improvements.



- Increases the value of adjacent or nearby land.
- Reduces annual municipal service costs (e.g., public safety, public service).
- Develops or redevelops vacant, underutilized parcels/acres.
- Other economic benefits.

### **SOCIAL BENEFITS**

- Provides public access.
- Creates a gathering place.
- Provides educational opportunities.
- Provides bicycle and pedestrian linkages.
- Removes a blighted image.
- Improves public health and safety.
- Enhances the cultural and civic heritage of the area.
- Incorporates aesthetically pleasing and ecologically informed design.
- Other social benefits.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

- Balances the built environment with the natural environment.
- Enhances environmental health or reduces ecological risks.
- Converts degraded parcels/acres to a natural area and/or open space.
- Creates habitats or other natural areas and/or open space.
- Improves biodiversity.
- Protects a rare, threatened or endangered species classified as regionally endangered or included in the [Ohio Natural Heritage Database](#).
- Protects high quality or regionally significant biological communities.
- Reduces the quantity or improves the quality of stormwater runoff.
- Restores floodplain functions.
- Other environmental benefits.

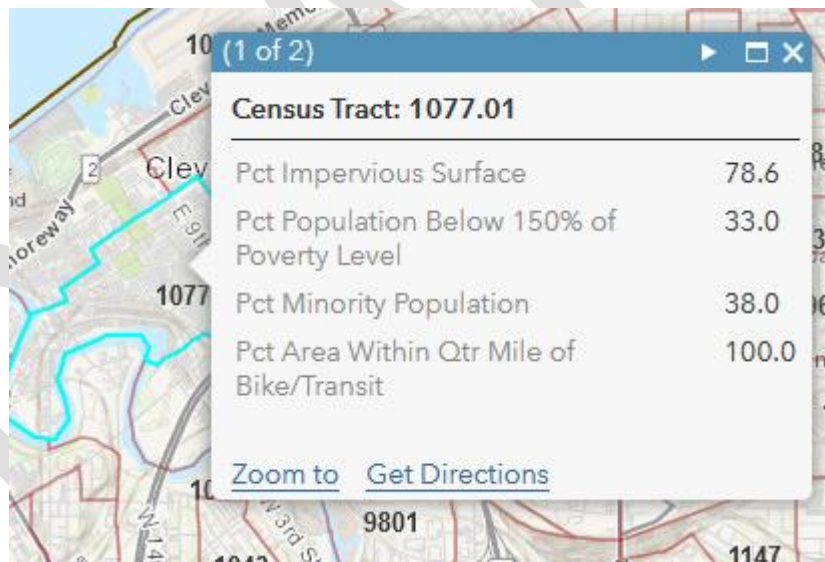
Provide supporting documentation, as necessary, to support the stated benefits in the Natural Resources Attachment. The supporting documentation can include specific citations to relevant studies or plans.

## **SECTION FIVE – COMMUNITY IMPACT**

Cuyahoga County needs an integrated system of key natural areas that will provide benefits to all residents, particularly those residents that reside in areas that lack greenspace and/or the ability to enjoy the benefits of these areas. The scoring for Community Impact will be awarded in the following categories: access to natural areas, percent low-income, percent minority population, and access to public transit and bikeways, based on 2020 census tract boundaries. Data for awarding points include the following sources:

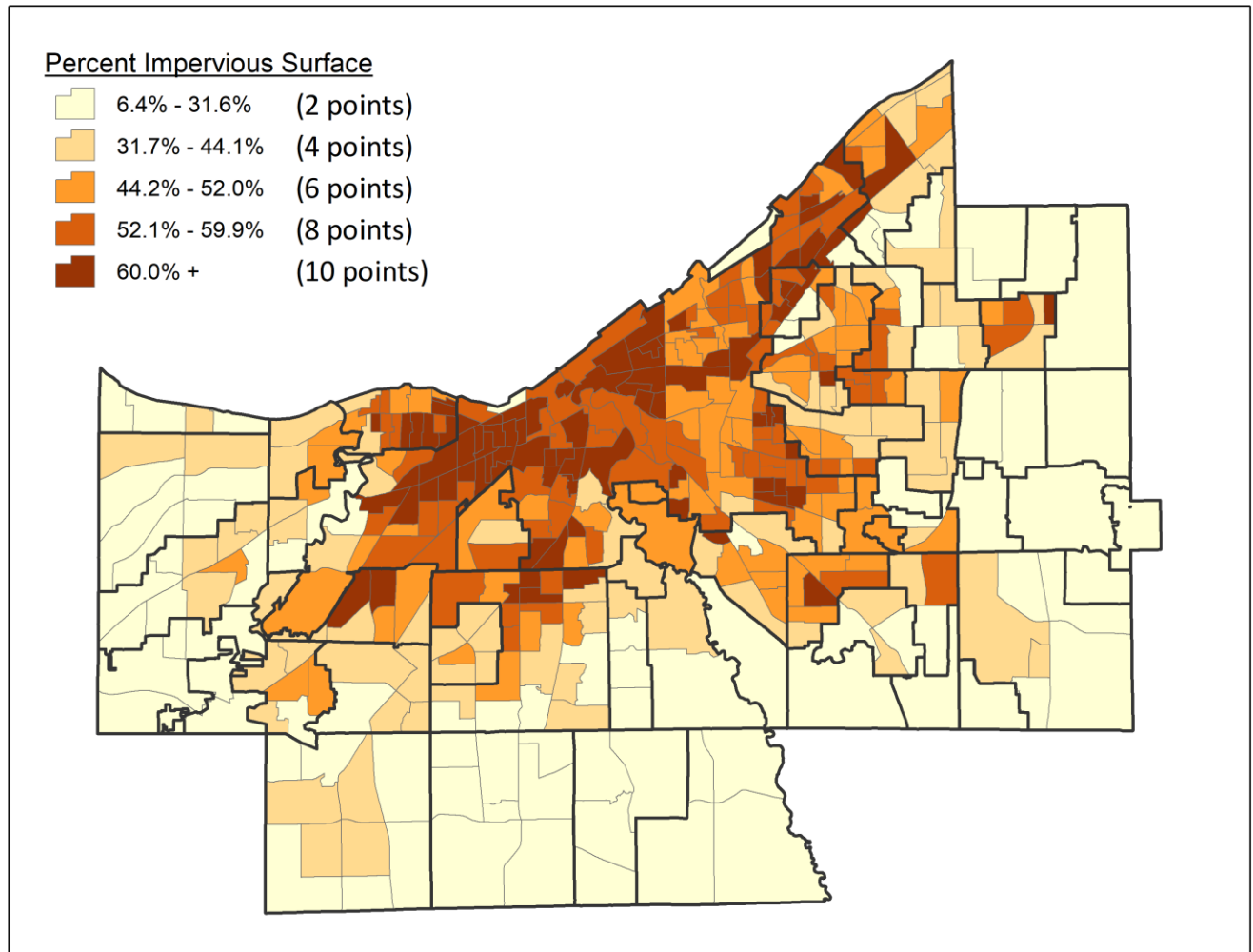
- **Access to Natural Areas:** Impervious Surface, 2019 Urban Tree Canopy Assessment Update
- **Percent Low-Income:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
- **Percent Minority Population:** 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File
- **Access to Public Transit and Bikeways:** RTA Stops, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (June 2021) and Bike Routes, NOACA Regional Bike Network, Existing Routes (2022)

Identify the census tract(s) where your project is located, using the interactive map at [District One Clean Ohio Conservation Greenspace Program Community Impact Interactive Map, FY 2024](#). Either zoom in to the proposed project area with standard pan/zoom tools or enter an address to find the census tract data. Indicate the census tract number(s) where the project is located and provide the associated data. See Sample below. For projects that have more than one census tract, the score will be calculated as an average of the census tracts.



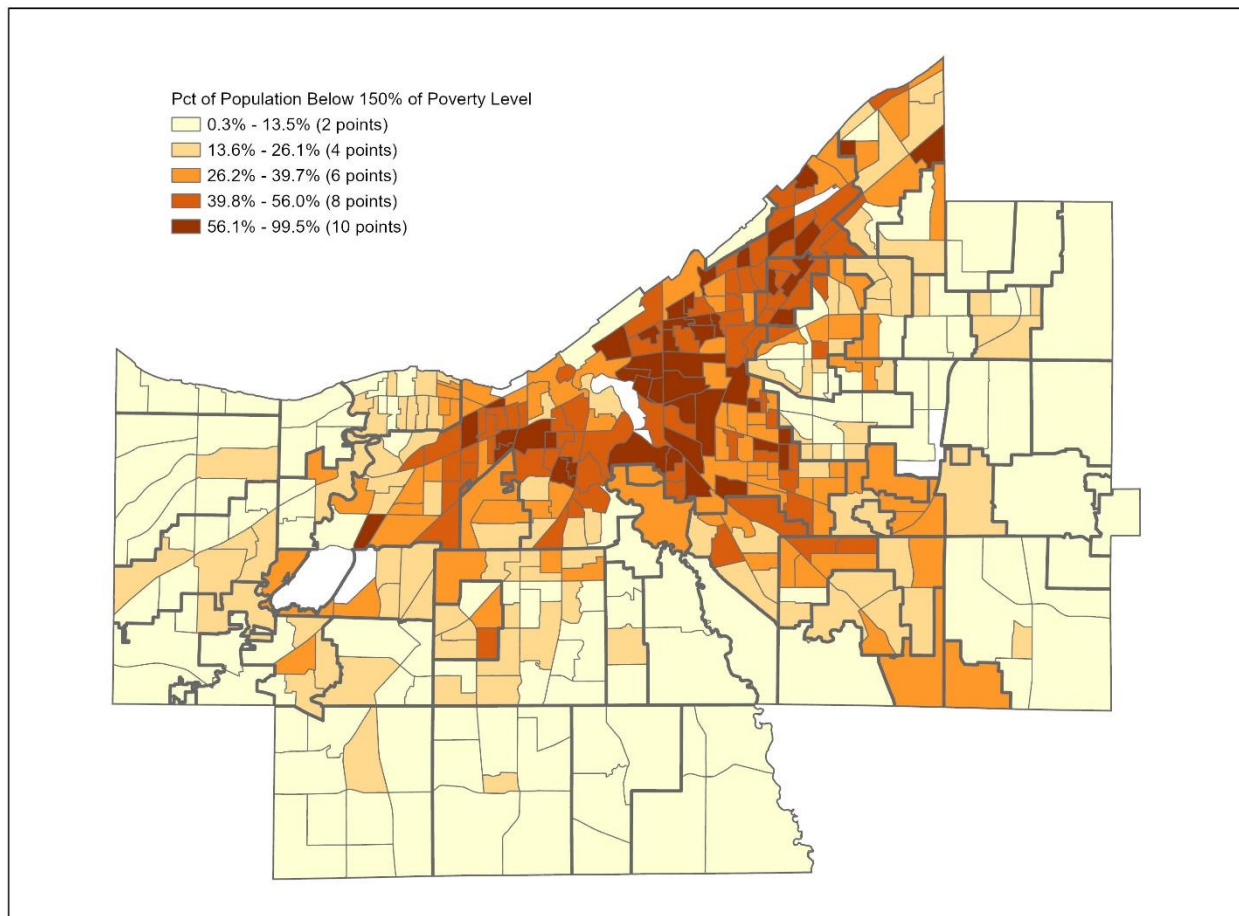
- **Access to Natural Areas** Points for access to natural areas will be awarded based on the percent of impervious surface in the census tract that contains the project area. The higher the percentage of impervious surface, the higher the points that will be awarded.

Note if the project is in more than one census tract, the score will be calculated as an average of the census tracts.



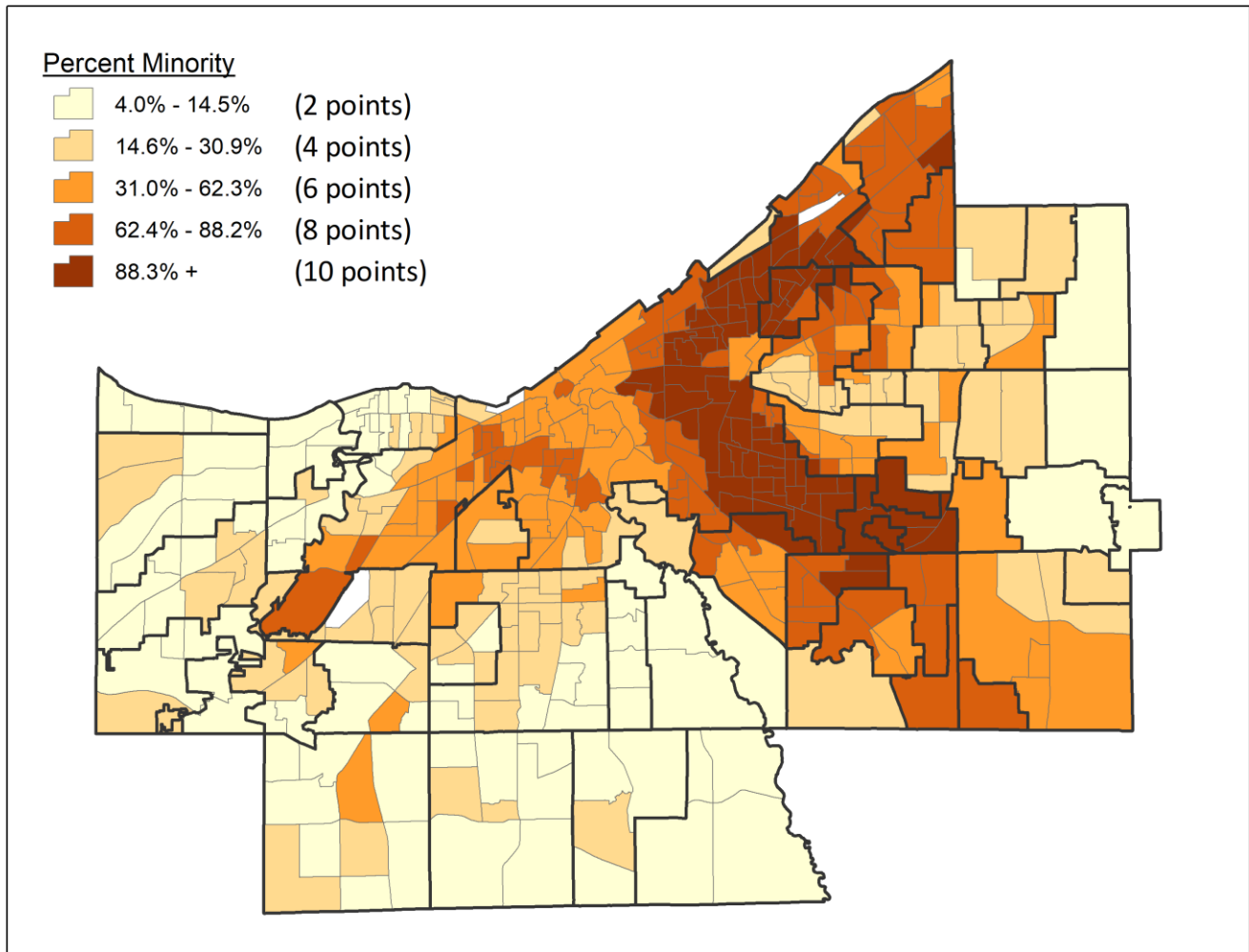
- **Percent Low-Income** Points will be awarded based on the percent of population below 150% of the poverty level in the census tract that contains the project area from Census Bureau, **2017-2021** American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The higher the percentage of Low-Income, the higher the points that will be awarded.

Note if the project is in more than one census tract, the score will be calculated as an average of the census tracts. Census tract(s) that have zero (0) population will be scored based on the average of the census tracts in a half-mile buffer around the project location.



- **Percent Minority Population** Points will be awarded based on the percentage of non-white and/or Hispanic population in the census tract that contains the project area from the 2020 U.S. Census. The higher the percentage of Minority Population, the higher the points that will be awarded.






Note if the project is in more than one census tract, the score will be calculated as an average of the census tracts. Census tract(s) that have zero (0) population will be scored based on the average of the census tracts in a half-mile buffer around the project location.

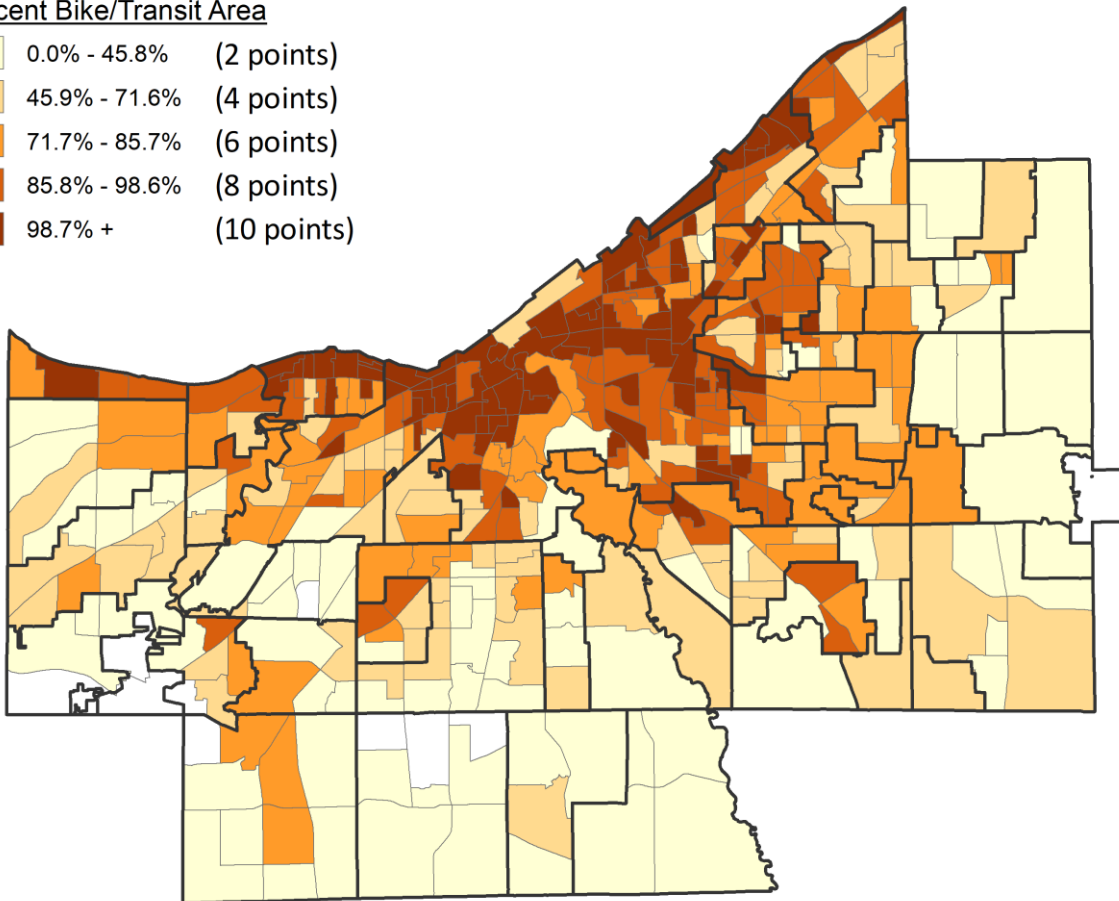


- **Access to Public Transit and Bikeways** Points will be awarded based on the percent area of the tract that is within a quarter mile of transit stops and bikeways in the tract that contains the project area. The higher the percentage of the area within a quarter mile of transit stops and bikeways, the higher the points that will be awarded.

Note if the project is in more than one census tract, the score will be calculated as an average of the census tracts.

Percent Bike/Transit Area

	0.0% - 45.8%	(2 points)
	45.9% - 71.6%	(4 points)
	71.7% - 85.7%	(6 points)
	85.8% - 98.6%	(8 points)
	98.7% +	(10 points)



# SECTION SIX - OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS

## 6.1 Local Match

**Scoring: 0- 10 points**

ORC 164.24 (2) and ORC 164.24 (3)

Projects will be awarded points in this category based on the total match provided. Please provide a breakdown of the local match (e.g., federal and state grants) and verify all sources with the following documentation:

- Certification of Applicant Revenues from the Chief Financial Officer that includes the applicant's name, project name, and fund or account for the revenues.
- Award letters for funds coming from other funding sources.

The higher the percentage of local match, the higher the points that will be awarded.

% of Local Match	FY 2024 Points
25	3
35	4
45	5
55	6
65	7
75	8
85	9
≥95	10

## 6.2 Level of Coordination

**Scoring: 0 - 10 points**

ORC 164.24 (4)

Projects that involve more than one agency or organization will be given extra consideration. The level of coordination can be financial contributions, the donation of property, assistance in planning and implementing the project, or responsibility for completing a part of the project. If applicable, explain:

- If this project is part of an adopted regional, county, and community or watershed plan. Provide project plan documentation.
- The agencies and organizations that have been involved in the planning and preparation of this project application.
- The level of coordination that each agency or organization has provided.
- Provide Letters of Support.



### **6.3 Readiness to Proceed**

**Scoring: 0 - 10 points**

ORC 164.24 (10)

#### **A. ACQUISITION – 5 Points**

***Projects not scheduled for acquisition within 12 months from the date of the Project Agreement will be rejected.***

Acquisition Projects must provide documentation of a pending land transaction:

- A fully executed contract with the owner (signed purchase agreement) will receive 5 points.
- A contract/purchase agreement that does not have all the signatures or a letter/memorandum of understanding will receive 3 points.

#### **B. PROJECT USE AND DEVELOPMENT – 5 Points**

Projects will be awarded up to 5 points based on readiness to implement improvements to the project area. What is the end use for the project site? Copy the Use and Development Restrictions language from the Proposed Deed and briefly explain the implementation process for the project use in the Proposed Deed. Provide one or more of the following documents:

- Project Schedule,
- Itemized estimate of probable costs for all improvements provided by an architect, landscape architect, or other qualified professional, and/or
- Documentation of appropriate permits or permitting process.

### **6.4 Immediacy**

**Scoring: 0 - 10**

Applicant should indicate and explain if the project area is vulnerable to being developed as something other than open space (e.g., commercial development) and how this development would be detrimental to the community.

### **6.5 Mineral Rights**

**Scoring: 0 - 5 points**

In accordance with the OPWC guidelines regarding gas and oil leasing, projects that acquire properties with no active gas and oil wells, or maintain available mineral, oil, gas and/or extraction rights will be awarded the full 5 points.

For projects with existing oil and gas wells, the Applicant must demonstrate the effectiveness of limiting disturbance; through legal agreements that minimize the impacts of existing oil and gas leases, through narrowing the lease area, minimizing surface impacts, and requiring restoration following disturbance.



The applicant must provide the following information on the property being acquired:

1. The date, if applicable, of any pre-existing lease or similar agreement on the mineral rights; including oil, gas and/or extraction leases, and if the lease or agreement allows for surface disturbance within the property.
2. Indicate the Mineral Rights that apply to the Project:
  - The current landowner will retain the mineral rights.
  - The mineral rights will be purchased and transferred to another entity .
  - The mineral rights will be purchased and maintained, with no active gas or oil wells.
  - The Applicant will obtain legal agreements with Lessee to minimize the impact of the mineral rights lease. Explain how the agreement will limit disturbances to sensitive natural resource areas from current oil and gas wells.

## EVALUATION POINTS

NRAC EVALUATION POINTS				
CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS	WEIGHT FACTOR	MAXIMUM WEIGHTED POINTS	%
<b>County Principles</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>40.7</b>
Preserves	10	3	30	
Enhances	10	1	10	
Restores	10	3	30	
Links Areas	10	2	20	
Allows	10	3	30	
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>20.3</b>
Economic	10	1	10	
Social	10	2	20	
Environmental	10	3	30	
<b>Community Impact</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>23.7</b>
Access to Natural Areas	10	2	20	
Percent Low-income	10	2	20	
Percent Minority Population	10	2	20	
Access to Transit and Bikeways	10	1	10	
<b>Other Relevant Factors</b>	<b>45</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>15.3</b>
Local Match	10	1	10	
Level of Coordination	10	1	10	
Readiness to Proceed - A	5	1	5	
Readiness to Proceed - B	5	1	5	
Immediacy	10	1	10	
Mineral Rights	5	1	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>		<b>295</b>	<b>100</b>
<b><i>A minimum score of 177 points, 60% of total points available, is required to be considered for funding</i></b>				

DRAFT